

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 TANANA 00197 141807Z

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ACTION COME-00

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FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6005

UNCLAS TANANARIVE 0197

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, MA, US

SUBJ: SHIPPING COMPANY REFUSES TO CARRY GRAPHITE TO U.S.

REFS: A) TANANARIVE A-159, 20NOV73; B) TANANARIVE 0066

PASS TO COMMERCE

BEGIN SUMMARY: SHIPPING LINE REFUSES TO TRANSPORT MALAGASY GRAPHITE TO U.S., CLAIMING NEW YORK DOCKWORKERS WILL NOT HANDLE THIS "DIRTY" CARGO. ACTION REQUESTED\*: CHECK WHETHER DOCKWORKERS IN NEW YORK AND PHILADELPHIA WILL UNLOAD BAGS OF GRAPHITE AND EXPRESS VIEWS ON POSSIBLE ALLEVIATING ACTION IF PROBLEM EXISTS.

1. AS DEPT AWARE FROM REFTELS, THERE IS LACK OF ADEQUATE SHIPPING FACILITIES BETWEEN MADAGASCAR AND U.S. PORTS. IN ADDITION TO DISCOURAGING AMERICAN EXPORTS TO MADAGASCAR, SITUATION ALSO FREQUENTLY HAMPERS SHIPMENT TO U.S. OF MALAGASY GRAPHITE, MATERIAL WE ARE TOLD BY CRUCIBLE MANUFACTURERS IS ESSENTIAL TO STEEL MANUFACTURE. DISRUPTION OF GRAPHITE SHIPMENTS TO U.S. IS PARTICULARLY DISTURBING BECAUSE MALAGASY GRAPHITE PRODUCERS CANNOT KEEP UP WITH GROWING FOREIGN DEMAND, AND MADAGASCAR IN TIME MAY FIND IT IS EASIER TO DEAL WITH OTHER FOREIGN BUYERS THAN WITH U.S. CRUCIBLE MANUFACTURERS.

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PAGE 02 TANANA 00197 141807Z

2. NEW PROBLEM HAS RECENTLY ARISEN FOR GRAPHITE SHIPMENTS TO

U.S. MR. PILLET, PRESIDENT OF LOCAL MINING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION, HAS INFORMED EMBASSY THAT IRANIAN LINES, SHIPPING COMPANY WHICH OCCASIONALLY PROVIDES DIRECT SERVICE FROM MADAGASCAR TO U.S., HAS NOW REFUSED TO TRANSPORT GRAPHITE. IRANIAN LINES CLAIMS GRAPHITE IS TOO "DIRTY" TO CARRY IN ITS SHIPS AND THAT, FURTHERMORE DOCKWORKERS IN NEW YORK REFUSE TO HANDLE BAGS OF GRAPHITE FOR SAME REASON. (DIRT PROBLEM OF GRAPHITE CAN APPARENTLY BE SERIOUS. FARRELL LINE REP RECENTLY IN TANANARIVE INFORMED EMBASSY HIS FIRM TRANSPORTED SOME GRAPHITE A FEW YEARS AGO AND GRAPHITE DUST IS STILL DIRTYING OTHER CARGO IN THESE SHIPS.)

3. SIX HUNDRED TONS OF GRAPHITE PRESENTLY AWAIT SHIPMENT TO DIXON CRUCIBLE OF NEW JERSEY. PILLET HOPES TO ENLIST AID OF GOMR IN PUTTING PRESSURE ON IRANIAN LINES TO TRANSPORT THIS AND FUTURE SHIPMENTS OF GRAPHITE BUT WISHES TO VERIFY REPORT REGARDING NEW YORK DOCKWORKERS.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: REQUEST DEPT ATTEMPT TO CHECK ACCURACY OF REPORT ABOUT DOCKWORKERS IN NEW YORK, ALSO SEE IF THERE IS ANY PROBLEM IN OFFLOADING GRAPHITE IN PHILADELPHIA WHICH COULD BE USED AS ALTERNATIVE PORT TO NEW YORK. REALIZE THIS TYPE OF INFO MAY BE DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN BUT EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO GET RESPONSE BEFORE 25FEB, IF POSSIBLE, SINCE NEXT IRANIAN LINES SHIP SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE TAMATAVE THAT DATE. IF UNLOADING PROBLEM DOES EXIST, WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE DEPT VIEWS ON WHETHER ALLEVIATING ACTION CAN BE TAKEN AT THE PORTS OR WHETHER SUPPLIERS WILL HAVE TO EXPLORE NEW MEANS OF TRANSPORT, E.G. CONTAINERS, PLASTIC SACKS, ETC.  
MENDENHALL

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